**Digital Divide**

1. What is the digital divide?

Initial Report: FALLING THROUGH THE NET: A Survey of the "Have Nots" in Rural and Urban America

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/fallingthru.html>

Pages 51 and 55 (when scrolling)

In [*Exploring the Digital Nation: Home Broadband Internet Adoption in the United States*](http://www.esa.doc.gov/sites/default/files/reports/documents/exploringthedigitalnation-computerandinternetuseathome.pdf), the Commerce Department reported that more than three-fourths (77 percent) of U.S. households own a computer, be it handheld or sitting on a desk or lap. But computer ownership and broadband adoption are not spread evenly across household income levels, race and ethnicity, age, level of education, disability status, and geographic location.

Consider a few of the reports specific findings:

* Seventy-three percent of urban (metropolitan area) households use the Internet, compared to 62 percent in rural (non-metropolitan area) households. Seventy percent of urban households have broadband access; 57 percent of rural households do.
* More than four-fifths of Asian households and roughly three-quarters of non-Hispanic White households use the Internet. Less than 60 percent of Black, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Hispanic households can access the Internet at home.
* Forty-six percent of households with incomes below $25,000 have home Internet access, compared to 84 percent of households in the $50,000 – $75,000 income bracket. There also are significant broadband adoption differences by household income: Nearly 90 percent of households in the $75,000 – $100,000 income range access the Internet using broadband; only 43 percent of households in under-$25,000 group do.
* Less than half of household heads with a disability use the Internet, compared to three-quarters of those without a disability.

A more fine-grained analysis of the data revealed greater variability by socio-economic characteristic; the department reported, for example, that less than 30 percent of Black rural homes whose head of household lacked a high school diploma use a computer.

*Catching Up or Leading the Way*

Yong Zhao

<http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Authors/Yong-Zhao.aspx?id=36527511001&nvid=a11b1>

**Schools and Technology**

***Tech, Teachers and Teens: Bridging the Divide***

* Several research studies have linked classroom technology use with improved academic achievement (Schacter, 2001). While parents and students increasingly demand technology use in classrooms (Chapman et al., 2010), large numbers of teachers lack the technical skills needed to effectively integrate technology into their classrooms (Weiss et al., 2001).
* Linda Darling-Hammond (2010) summarizes the case: "The new mission of schools is to prepare students to work at jobs that do not yet exist, creating ideas and solutions for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not yet been invented."
* In addition to online learning, Web-based educational technologies continue to expand K-12 learning experiences. Ferriter (2010) suggests that teachers spend some time exploring websites, wikis, [Twitter](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb5248/is_31_28/ai_n58163369/?lc=int_mb_1001) and other social networking sites. Those activities will establish the power of technology as a way to share resources with others, increase differentiation, establish ownership and motivation, provide intellectual challenges, and above all ... save time. A few hours spent playing an action video game can also provide insight into the effect technology has had on the attention span, brain development, and perspectives of today's teens.
* The methods demonstrating the most impact on teacher behaviors are not onetime sessions, or even a series of workshops or conferences. Even summer institutes show little or no impact on teacher practices. What leads to most implementation appears to include coaching, job-embedded action research, and networks ([Speck](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4191/is_20100621/ai_n54448622/pg_2/?lc=int_mb_1001) and Knipe, 2005).
* Manzo (2010) reported that while more than 80 percent of districts offer professional development in integrating technology into instruction, developing curriculum plans that include technology to address the standards, and applying technology to assess student achievement, fewer than 40 percent of those districts mandated teacher participation.
* Student-owned devices, now the catalyst for many student discipline referrals, could be used in the classroom as a learning tool (Ash, 2010). Hardware that students might already own does not cost schools; however, issues of equity between more affluent and less affluent students become exacerbated if schools rely solely on student ownership.

[***The New Digital Divide***](http://educ648.wikispaces.com/file/view/The+New+Digital+Divide+Anonymous.pdf)

***Digital Divide***

“We’re still using technology to teach at our students, rather than putting technology into kids’ hands as a tool for them to learn with,” argues Julie Smith, vice president for K–12 education at CDW-G. Requiring students to turn in typed essays or to use three online sources in a research report is just scratching the surface of what true digital literacy means. And because today’s students are so tech savvy, they can sense those missed opportunities. Only four out of ten students surveyed by CDW-G felt their schools were meeting their technology expectations.

Speak Up 2010 report conducted by the technology nonprofit Project Tomorrow, 53 percent of middle and high school students feel that the restrictions on using cell phones are the biggest obstacle to using technology at school.

30 percent of students say their schools ask for their input on technology. Worse, while 75 percent of teachers feel they understand how students want to use technology as a learning tool, only 49 percent of their students agree.

Two-thirds of parents who responded to the Speak Up 2010 survey said they would be willing to purchase a mobile device for their child to use in school.

The key to getting kids to stay on task is to develop clear policies and consequences for misuse, recommends the Center for Education Policy and Law at the University of San Diego. A consistent school-wide policy is a must.

***New York Times***

* If you were white, middle-class and urban, the Internet was opening untold doors of information and opportunity. If you were poor, rural or a member of a minority group, you were fast being left behind.
* Cable Providers
* Many job applications are already possible only online; soon, job interviews will be held by way of videoconference, saving cost and time.
* True, Americans of all stripes are adopting smartphones at breakneck speeds; in just over four years the number has jumped from about 10 percent to about 35 percent; among Hispanics and African-Americans, it’s roughly 44 percent. Most of the time, smartphone owners also have wired access at home: the Pew Internet and American Life Project recently reported that 59 percent of American adults with incomes above $75,000 had a smartphone, and a 2010 study by the Federal Communications Commission found that more than 90 percent of people at that income level had wired high-speed Internet access at home.

But that is not true for lower-income and minority Americans. According to numbers released last month by the Department of Commerce, a mere 4 out of every 10 households with annual household incomes below $25,000 in 2010 reported having wired Internet access at home, compared with the vast majority — 93 percent — of households with incomes exceeding $100,000. Only slightly more than half of all African-American and Hispanic households (55 percent and 57 percent, respectively) have wired Internet access at home, compared with 72 percent of whites.

These numbers are likely to grow even starker as the 30 percent of Americans without any kind of Internet access come online. When they do, particularly if the next several years deliver subpar growth in personal income, they will probably go for the only option that is at all within their reach: wireless smartphones. A wired high-speed Internet plan might cost $100 a month; a smartphone plan might cost half that, often with a free or heavily discounted phone thrown in.

The problem is that smartphone access is not a substitute for wired.

* The only thing close is FiOS. But, according to Diffraction Analysis, a research firm, it costs six times as much as comparable service in Hong Kong, five times as much as in Paris and two and a half times as much as in Amsterdam. When it comes to the retail cost of fiber access in America, we do about as well as Istanbul.
* The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ranks America 12th among developed nations for wired Internet access.

***Roadblocks on the Information Highway***

* Even when computer access is equal, its use is different in different communities (Celano & Neuman, 2008; Neuman & Celano, 2006). Middleincome children start using computers at a younger age and get more adult assistance. Economically disadvantaged children tend to use computer time more for entertainment than do their middle-class peers, who use it more for information gathering. Over time, the differences accumulate, meaning that middle-class children will zoom ahead and low-income children will be left behind. What started as a gap will grow into a chasm.
* Schools in low-income neighborhoods must help their students keep up with their more advantaged peers. Quite simply, low-income children need greater access to technology in school to make up for their limited access at home.
* The hyperlinks may encourage readers to navigate their own nonlinear paths through the information.